

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

August 8, 2013

Medical Plan Changes for 2014

By Jeff Padgett

Central Office

Yesterday the commission approved the medical plan board of trustee’s recommendations and some changes to meet federal requirements.

Districts

Northwest

Northeast

Kansas City

Central

St. Louis

Southwest

Southeast

Most employees will not see any increase in their medical insurance premiums in 2014. However, there will be an increase for those active employees with the subscriber-only plan. And while the maximum amount you can pay out of pocket in a year will be increasing, your office copays now will be counted toward that amount.

More details will be coming in letters sent to your home this fall and other Connections articles. Here are the basic changes:

- For active employees in the employee only category, the cost will increase \$16 per month - 84 percent (\$355) will be paid by the Commission; 16 percent (\$64) will be paid by employees per month.
- For retirees in the non-Medicare rate category cost will increase 6 percent. The Commission’s cost for this category will increase by the same percentage.
- There will be an increase for all employees and retirees in the annual maximum out-of-pocket expenses. However, the amounts that you pay in office visit copayments will now count toward this cost, as required by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. The increases will be \$325 per individual or \$975 per family.
 - Individual increase - from \$1,275 to \$1,600 in network; \$2,100 to \$2,425 out of network.
 - Family increase - from \$3,825 to \$4,800 in network; \$6,300 to \$7,275 out of network.



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Team Talk

by Roberta Broeker

Hello Team MoDOT! I just read an article about reducing the chances of Alzheimer’s. Researchers have proven the old saying of “use it, or lose it.” People who work longer or engage in activities that challenge their brains are less likely to suffer from dementia. The mind is like other parts of our bodies. It needs exercise to stay at its best.

When you strain a muscle, you go to a doctor. But what do you do when you strain your mind? Sometimes life can overwhelm us. Try as we may, we can’t always work it out by ourselves. Talking to friends and family can sometimes help, but they may be part of the problem. Where do you go? The Employee Assistance Program can be a great place to start.

EAP
help. when you need it.

The EAP is a free service provided by the department. You can call the toll-free number to find a professional counselor in your area. You and each member of your immediate family can receive professional help that’s specific to your situation and completely confidential.

I’d heard the EAP was more than just mental health counseling, so I visited the ComPsych website. I was amazed at the range of professional advice available. I could talk with professional advisors about a wide range of financial and legal matters, from getting out of credit card debt to working with a bad landlord. I also found the website was full of hundreds of articles with tips on staying well, building relationships, getting ahead at work, managing finances, working through legal issues, even healthy recipes and how having a pet can lower your stress

level. (Although if you’d ever met my cat, that might be a little hard to believe.) What’s more, you can save your favorite articles online to access more quickly or reread at your leisure. I was impressed, and I think you will be too!

Take a look at MoDOT’s Employee Assistance Program at <http://www.modot.org/newsandinfo/EAP.htm> or call 1-800-808-2261.

Thanks for being part of Team MoDOT!

Outlook Pilot Progressing, Transition for All Employees Near

By Kellen Burns



This week the Information Systems Division began deploying the pilot portion to transition from Lotus Notes to Microsoft Outlook.

The transition for all other users should begin in mid to late August. In preparation of this transition, you may soon see the Microsoft Outlook icon on your desktop. Do not use the icon until instructed to do so. It's important to note that once you have the icon installed, you may be prompted when logging in to Lotus Notes to set "your default mail program." IS recommends that until you are migrated and instructed to do so, select "No" when this prompt appears.

There are many benefits to Microsoft Outlook. Being the most widely used e-mail application it will undoubtedly integrate us with our external partners better than ever and also provide features that we currently do not have at our disposal. You will also keep valuable integrations like Harmon.ie and be introduced to Lync (Microsoft's version of Sametime Chat).

The migration process has generated many great questions, like "[How do I get Outlook on my mobile device?](#)" or "[Will my folders move over to Outlook?](#)" The answers to these and many more questions can be found in the Outlook Email Transition [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document located on our [Training Site](#).

Have questions that aren't covered in the FAQ? Submit them to the [HelpDesk!](#)

Ridership on Missouri's Amtrak Service Continues to Grow

More Missourians are parking their cars and opting for the train. During fiscal year 2013, Amtrak Missouri River Runner ridership grew to 196,661 passengers. This is the sixth consecutive year of ridership growth.

Increased reliability is the primary reason behind Missouri River Runner growth. Engineers delivered passengers on time 90 percent of the time in FY 2013. On-time reliability also drives overall customer satisfaction, currently at 91 percent; the third best of all Amtrak routes year-to-date.

"If you haven't ridden the train in a while, try it again. You will be pleased with the quality of service on the Missouri River Runner," said Michelle Teel, multimodal operations director at the Missouri Department of Transportation. "Significant investments in the corridor and committed efforts by Union Pacific, Amtrak and MoDOT ensure passengers get to their destinations on time and at a very reasonable price."

An increase in riders results in greater ticket revenues, which reduces the amount of state financial support. Ticket revenue increased by 130 percent in the last six years.

Twice a day the Missouri River Runner serves Kansas City, St. Louis and eight points in between - Kirkwood, Washington, Hermann, Jefferson City, Sedalia, Warrensburg, Lee's Summit and Independence. Reservation and train status information is available at [Amtrak.com](#), by using the free Amtrak smartphone app and at 1-800-USA-RAIL (1-800-872-7245).



Livestock, Corndogs and MoDOT

by Holly Dentner



This collage of highway map covers is on display in the state fair expo center as part of the MoDOT centennial display. The new state maps will be available statewide by the end of August.

Since 1922, MoDOT has had a presence at the Missouri State Fair. This year is no different, and starting Aug. 8 the Transportation Expo Center and Highway Gardens will be open to fairgoers who want to learn a little more about MoDOT. . . or at least take a break from the heat!

The expo center will feature a displays about Amtrak, Adopt-A-Highway, Motor Carrier Services, and MoDOT's Centennial. Visitors can play a game to learn more about storm water pollution or participate in several highway safety activities, including child passenger safety and distracted driving. Barrel Bob will be stationed in the highway gardens, kids can complete a scavenger hunt, and on MoDOT Day, Aug. 9, fairgoers can help celebrate MoDOT's birthday with free popcorn and cookies.

Every district and the Employee Advisory Council are hosting days at the fair, which runs Aug. 8-18.

Centennial Video



To continue MoDOT's 100th Anniversary centennial celebration, a short video was created that looks back over landmark events in MoDOT history. If you haven't seen this yet, take a minute. It's awesome! The video will be running in the Expo Center and Highway Gardens at the state fair. [Video.](#)



Major Happenings in St. Louis



Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge

The project to build a new bridge over the Mississippi River between Missouri and Illinois hit a milestone last week when construction from both sides of the river met in the middle.

See the full story about the project on the St. Louis District page - [St. Louis](#)

Photo: MTA project manager Tom Tavernaro speaks with Missouri Governor Jay Nixon (far right) about the joining of the two sides of the I-70 bridge across the Mississippi River. The governor toured the bridge the day after crews placed the final floor beam for the new bridge.



Arch Project Groundbreaking

Officials recently broke ground for the Park over the Highway project in downtown St. Louis. The project is a part of the CityArchRiver 2015 project which will improve pedestrian accessibility and create a modern urban national park.

Photo (left to right): St. Louis Mayor Francis Slay, St. Louis County Executive Charlie Dooley, U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, MoDOT Chief Engineer Ed Hassinger and Walter Metcalfe with CityArchRiver 2015 project.

Arch Project Video

A very cool video and more details on the project is located on the web - [Arch Project](#)



Out of the Mud

In 1920, Missouri voters passed a bonding initiative, raising \$60,000,000 worth of bond sales to build 6,000 miles of highways and bridges that connected county seats.

Photos show the condition of the roads, and a flier encourages voters to "Lift Missouri Out of the Mud."





EVERY VOTER SHOULD HELP!



And build 6,000 mile state system of hard roads during the present generation with \$60,000,000 bond issue

NO TAX ON PROPERTY

WHOLE COST PAID BY AUTO FEES

ELECTION NOVEMBER 2nd 1920

WATCH YOUR BALLOT!

To Vote "YES" on No. 6

Cross out "NO"

What's Happening

MoDOT Staff Accept Awards for Winning Projects

MoDOT staff accepted awards for the Safe and Sound Bride Project and the shared four-lane highway on Route 5 between Camdenton and Lebanon at the annual Mid-America Association of State Transportation Officials. The projects won top honors. See the full story in the July 25 edition of Connections - [Award](#)

MoDOT Director Dave Nichols, Central District Design Engineer Nichole Hood, and Safe and Sound Project Director Ken Warbritton (center) accepting the awards.



Chat With the Chief

Don't forget to check out Chief Engineer Ed Hassinger's blog post. - [Chat with the Chief](#) (link works for active employees only).



Tracker Available

The second quarter Tracker is posted on the web. Like last quarter, Tracker continues to evolve to align with our values and tangible results with some of our new measures, reporting data for the first time.

The statewide Tracker meeting will be held on August 14. Staff will review the results so we can see the progress we are making to achieve our tangible results.

Check out the publication on the web – [Tracker](#).



Summer Discounts For Words of Fun and Oceans of Fun

Summer is in full swing and Worlds of Fun and Oceans of Fun are offering employee discounts on single-day tickets.

See the flier for information dates, ticket prices, how to order and promotion codes - [Fun](#)



Rams Football Ticket Discounts

Football season will be here before you know it, and the St. Louis Rams offer ticket discounts to state employees.

Click here to see a flier with all the details - [Rams](#)

Win a MoDOT Centennial T-shirt!

Congratulations to Chris Peper in Central Office and Kathy Brown in the Northwest District for earning MoDOT Centennial T-shirts by knowing the popular name of the bridge built at the same time as the St. Louis' Arch: the



Poplar Street Bridge.

Enter online here: [Quiz](#) or fax your answer, name and phone number to (573) 526-4859 by Friday, Aug. 23 for a shot at the next t-shirt give away (*link works for active employees only*).

This week's topic is a lot more recent:

In 2004, Missourians passed Amendment 3, which realigned the distribution of motor vehicle sales tax and other revenue to pay for the bonds MoDOT was required to sell. With the proceeds of the bond sale, MoDOT embarked on an improvement program which was called:

- **Rumble, Reflect, Repave**
- **Smoother, Safer, Sooner**

- **Better, Faster, Cheaper**
- **Cream, Two Sugars**

August Service Anniversaries

35 Years

Koelle Gene Barbour - NW
Michael T. Gardner - NW
Kenneth L. Hollocher - SL

30 Years

Randall Dean Newkirk - KC

25 Years

Richard Steven Teagarden - NW
Bruce A. Harvel - KC
Theodie J. Morris - SE
Terri Lynnee Finley - CO
Eileen Helen Rackers – CO

20 Years

Shannon D. Kusilek - NW
Brenda Elaine Christie - NW
Mark Christopher Fisher - KC
Joseph Brian Jones - KC
Virginia A. Hird - CD
Kenneth Allen Black - SW
Johnny Wes Hicks - SW
Malissa S. Julien - SW
Steven V. Campbell - SW
Dave B. Taylor - SW
Freddy D. Scarbrough - SE
Paul Joseph Todey - CO
Suresh P. Patel - CO
Michael Carl Meinkoth - CO
Michael E. Miller - CO

15 Years

Joseph D. Hinton - KC
James Lloyd Whitsitt - KC
Linda K. Polen - KC
James Dean Collison - CD
Joseph T. Schmidt - CD
Barbara Lynn Cain - SL
Jason L. Kopp - SL
Tracee D. Stotts - SE
John Samuel Wood - SE
William K. Politte - CO

10 Years

Christopher A. James - NE
Jennifer Ann Benefield - KC
Cedrick Charles Owens - KC
Scott David Rogers - KC
Christopher A. West - KC
Dirk R. Honeycutt - CD
Renita Ashley - CD
Matthew T. Koenig - SL
Stephen P. Butler - SL
James H. Holdmeier - SL
Brandon Michael Anderson - SL
David Lee Morris - SW
Michael Gene Ridings - SW
Kirby F. Woods - SE
David L. Bishop - SE
Christie R. Martin - CO
Brianna L. Greenwood - CO
Shane Franklin Alford - CO
Jonathan A. Nelson – CO

5 Years

Cory Douglas Amthor - NW
Kyle Scott Driskell - NW
Dennis Howard Cooney - NW
James Edward Payne - NE
Jimmie L. Fight - KC
Thankam Mathew - KC
David R. Odom - KC
Kory E. Hecht - CD
Brent M. Holtsclaw - CD
John M. Rice - CD
Michael James Elias - SL
Almedin Muratovic - SL
Timothy M. Werner - SL
Brian Allen Ducote - SL
Jesse Delane Keller - SL
Holly Snodgrass - SL
Travis L. Pierce - SW
Kevin Wayne Keller - SW
Krista M. Sanders - SE
Tammy L. Baker - SE
Donald Scott Cook - SE
Arlene S. Bax - CO

Connections

The mission of Connections is to be a source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide.

Customer Relations - MoDOT
P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2840 / www.modot.org

Editor: Tammy Wallace

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

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Central Office

Sign Shop Auction Set for August 12

by Becky Jackson

MoDOT will hold an auction of equipment from the department's former Sign Shop, along with other surplus items from Central Office and Central District.

The auction will begin at 10:30 a.m. Aug. 12, with a preview at 9 a.m. Items include Sign Shop equipment, tools and materials, file cabinets, desks and other office surplus.

This will be a live public auction with an interactive online auction. MoDOT employees who would like to view or bid on the auction during working hours must obtain preapproval from their supervisors and use annual leave, compensatory time or flex time.

For more information or questions regarding the auction, contact Kristi Hixson at 573-526-1975, or for details on policy regarding participation in the auction, please contact Steve Meystrik at 573-526-7644.



Policy Q&A:

- [Can employees bid on items being sold at this auction?](#) Yes. Personnel Policy 2514, "Conflict of Interest", states that MoDOT employees may purchase tools or equipment such as automobiles, tractors, trucks, and other items declared as surplus equipment either directly or indirectly when such sales are made at public sale (i.e., auction, sealed bid, or dealer).
- [Can employees attend the auction in person?](#) Yes, but they will need to use annual leave, compensatory time, or flex time to do so. Employees are free to attend the auction over their lunch break.
- [Can a member of my family \(such as my spouse\) bid on items being sold at the auction?](#) Yes. Personnel Policy 2514, "Conflict of Interest" allows for this since it is a public auction.

What's Happening at Central Office

Charitable Campaign Fund Raiser - Royals Tickets!

Get Your Cracker Jacks Here...

Join Central Office Human Resources in a little pre-game activity for the [Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign!](#)

Make a donation and receive a box of Cracker Jacks.
Aug. 6 thru Aug. 8

Everyone wins, but one lucky winner's box will contain four tickets to a KC Royals Baseball Game! (*Hy-Vee infield seats - \$68 value - choice of designated dates*).

Suggested Donation: \$5 (*amount optional*)



Get your Cracker Jacks from: Michelle Luebbert or Bobbie Uballes
HR Division, 601 West Main

The winner will be announced at noon on Aug. 9

Click here for flier - Fund Raiser
Click here for Royals Schedule - KC Royals



CPR Training

Location: HRED Training Room B, 601 W. Main, Jefferson City

Aug. 15		12 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Aug. 20		12 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Aug. 21		12 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Sept. 10	8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	12 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Sept. 19		12 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Sept. 24	8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

You are now able to register for CPR classes through LMS! Instructions below. If you have already emailed Dani about taking a class, your name will be added to the LMS roster.

Sign up now using this LMS Student Center Sign-On link - [LMS](#) and follow the instructions below.

- Click the LMS Student Center Sign-On link above.
- Click "Sign On" in the upper right-hand corner.
- Type your Social Security Number twice as requested, then hit OK.
- Click on "Class Schedule" on the left side of the page.
- Select All Classes on the drop down box.
- Type 24597 in the "Search for these words:" field.
- Press "GO"
- Hit the "Select" button next to the course title and date that you'd like to attend
- In the upper right corner, click "Enroll in this Class."
- When prompted "Are you sure you want to enroll...?", click "Yes"

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Northwest District Hosts Regional ALD Meeting

Approximately 40 employees from various districts and offices across the state gathered in St. Joseph Tuesday, July 30, for an all-day regional Accelerated Leadership Development meeting to expand their transportation knowledge and develop their leadership skills. Employees came from all over to attend the meeting, including Kansas City, Jefferson City, Hannibal, Joplin and of course St. Joseph.

The presentations for the day included both internal and external speakers. Kicking off the meeting were opening remarks from Northwest District Engineer Don Wichern, Assistant District Engineer Tony McGaughy and Assistant to the District Engineer in Kansas City Randy Hartman. Next, attendees learned about the values of ethics in the work place from Dr. James Okapal, associate professor of philosophy with Missouri Western State University. His presentation on “What Would Harry Potter Do?” took the popular Harry Potter book series and related them to ethical questions we face in today’s work place.

After lunch, Marci Bennett, executive director of the St. Joseph Convention & Visitor Bureau and spokesperson for Highway 36 – The Way of American Genius, spoke to the group about the importance of the corridor and its correlation to the region’s history and economic vitality.

Rounding out the day was Dr. Tim Crowley a professional speaker, trainer, and author who helped participants better understand how to not only keep themselves more energized and happier at work and home, but how to help co-workers and family do the same.

The ALD program was designed to help focus department efforts on developing employees for senior management level positions. Members of the Senior Management Team nominate employees for participation. Most participants hold mid-management level positions such as area engineer, project manager, community relation’s manager, assistant district engineer, etc. Participants must create a development plan and work on their own to close development gaps, attend leadership related activities as scheduled, and complete assessments and other evaluation tools to help them with their leadership skills.



Randy Hartman, assistant to the district engineer in Kansas City, helped kick off the day's events.



Northwest District Engineer Don Wichern also presented to the attendees.

Partnering for Planting

Representatives from the Missouri Department of Conservation as well as maintenance personnel from the Northwest District and Central Office met to tour the first phase of the proposed planting of 800 native Missouri tree seedlings from St. Joseph to Hannibal. This group examined each location in Phase 1 to determine the best planting location as well as to discuss the type of species to be planted. Phase 1 could be complete as early as fall of 2013. Those on the site visits were Maintenance Superintendent Scott Gray, Roadside Management Specialist Stacy Armstrong, Missouri Department of Conservation Outreach and Education District Supervisor T.J. Peacher and Assistant Maintenance and Traffic Engineer David Scrivens.



The first planting site near the U.S. Hwy 36 Pony Express bridge in downtown St. Joseph is discussed by the site visit group.



The group discussed how the planting area at the second site, east of Route AC in St. Joseph, would affect maintenance activities and roadway safety.



The group had a very steep climb to reach the ridge where the planting is proposed for the third site.



The planting site at the top of the ridgeline has good drainage and topsoil for the proposed Hazelnut shrubs.



The fifth site in Phase 1 will feature a smaller showy planting of either Washington Hawthorne or Black Cherry.



After discussing the seventh location, an alternate site on the ridge in the background was chosen for the planting of River Birch or similar small to medium trees.

Maintenance Leadership Learns 21 Laws

Maintenance leaders from across the Northwest District have been learning the "21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership." Several groups went through the training with sessions held over a period of three weeks. Having several sessions allowed the maintenance supervisors, assistant maintenance supervisors and maintenance crew leaders to break into smaller groups for discussions of leadership principles. Over the course of the three week sessions, approximately 90 maintenance personnel were able to participate in the training.



Maintenance and Traffic Engineer Marty Liles helps with a discussion during the first session of training.



District leaders, including Assistant District Engineer Tony McGaughy and Maintenance and Traffic Engineer Marty Liles assisted with the training.

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No "Big Dig" Expected in Louisiana

Environmental Assessment Continues for New Champ Clark Bridge

By Marisa Ellison, MBC, MoDOT Customer Relations Manager, feature for the Louisiana Press Journal

If Louisiana area residents were expecting a large excavation to look for Native artifacts or other historic items as part of the environmental assessment process for a new bridge over the Mississippi River, they are going to be disappointed. Michael Meyer, historic archeologist with MoDOT, is doing research in preparation of a recommendation for the environmental assessment, which will determine the location of a new bridge.

"So far, it doesn't appear to be any large-scale resources such as burial mounds, Indian villages, or a Civil War battlefields, but there could be smaller properties that would be research worthy and of interest to the local community," Meyer said. "This type of research is focused on the everyday lives of the citizens of Louisiana, rather than the political figures and national events you read about in history books," he added. Yet, he doesn't want to rule anything out, because if the bridge is located on the north side of its existing location, there will have to be a lot of digging to make room for it.

"In comparing maps from the late 1800's to now, there really hasn't been a lot of change, especially on the north side, because the land was terraced then, much like it is now," he explained. "However, what we could find when we begin digging during construction is evidence of old underground structures, like cisterns or outhouses," he added. "Much of what is there today was more than likely built on top of these structures, and while these may not necessarily be really neat items to find, it is necessary to determine where these are and the environmental impacts digging them up may have," he continued.

He added that when Louisiana was settled in the early 1800's, any building and structures more than likely would have removed the prehistoric landscape, thereby reducing the chance of finding something prior to that time frame. To actually find these underground structures would require large excavation equipment, and Meyer said area residents probably wouldn't be thrilled to have their yards torn up just to look for these types of underground structures.

"What we can do to find out the history is utilize information in the museum, the library, and talk with area folks who have lived here much of their lives," Meyer said.

Last week, he visited with a local resident and Carol Ray at the Historic Museum. "They both gave me some great information and good leads," he said.

MoDOT is considering adding in the US 54/MO 79 intersection west of the bridge as part of the project, so Meyer will continue to do research in that area, as well. Riverview Cemetery is not expected to be impacted. More information about the Champ Clark Bridge project can be found at www.champclarkbridge.com.



In addition to learning about the area, Michael Meyer is teaching two interns about historic archeology and what's involved in a project to determine environmental impacts. He is pictured here in the middle at the Champ Clark Bridge with Kim Proctor, from Southeast Missouri State University, a historic preservation graduate this August, and Catherine Gravemann, a senior at University of Missouri – Columbia, majoring in anthropology.

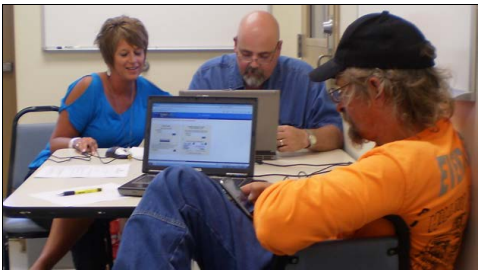
Around the District...



Above: Adam Smith's family members and several members of the public gathered to unveil the new interchange designation in honor of the fallen soldier. Right: Navy Seal Smith.



On August 1, family and friends of Petty Officer 2nd Class (Seal) Adam O. Smith, held a Heroes Way sign dedication ceremony at the Bevier City Park in his honor. Smith was killed in action in Afghanistan on September 21, 2010. To honor his memory and sacrifice to our country, the sign that will be placed along US 36 at Routes C and O near Bevier, was unveiled. The 26-year-old sailor from Hurdland, Mo., was killed in a helicopter crash during combat operations in Zabul province. He was assigned to an East Coast-based SEAL team. The 2002 Bevier High School graduate entered the Navy in 2004. He had been stationed at Virginia Beach, Va., and also served in Iraq with his brother Andrew and two of his cousins.



Jennifer Butner, human resources, helps applicants at the job fair held at Wayland last week. Ellen Gehringer, human resources manager, was really pleased with the job fair outcome as it helped develop a good pool of applicants.



Kevin Haner, senior equipment tech, earns how to use the AED machine during Standard First Aid and CPR class. The NE District is going for a 100% goal to get all its employees trained.

ARRIVE ALIVE - Safety Coalition Hiring

The NE Coalition for Roadway Safety is seeking to add an outreach coordinator to our west/north area. This individual will assist with outreach and educational opportunities that support the coalition goals (example: visit schools for Battle of the Belt, attend safety events, etc), must be professional and have excellent interpersonal skills. If you know of someone that would be a good candidate for this position, please call Marisa Christy-Kerns at 660-385-8257. The individual is compensated by the coalition for their time when participating in events.

For more info

Marisa Brown-Ellison
Customer Relations Manager
Northeast District
573.248.2502
Marisa.Ellison@modot.mo.gov

1711 S. Highway 61
Hannibal, MO 63401

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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Mentoring the Next Generation of Transportation Professionals

by Michele Compton

In July, the Kansas City District hosted students from the University of Missouri-Kansas City's Kansas City Summer Transportation Institute as they toured the district office, Scout, and met many of the transportation professionals. These KC youth were learning about different career paths including a future in transportation or engineering.

KC-STI provides an opportunity for high school aged students from the metropolitan area to learn about careers in the transportation industry. Each student receives a scholarship and participates in an intense, four-week summer program. The program also includes self-discovery activities designed to enhance teamwork, leadership, and provide students with an introduction to college life.

This is the 10th year MoDOT has partnered with the **UMKC Institute for Human Development**, serving as an integral member of KC-STI's Intermodal Advisory Committee. As part of the committee, MoDOT helps plan the annual program, including four weeks of curriculum and site visits to expand students' experience of transportation-related career fields. MoDOT representatives also facilitate on-campus classroom discussions with the students in addition to the one day site visit to district office.

As part of the exploration of transportation fields, professionals from local businesses and organizations lead skill building workshops or tours of airports, construction sites, training programs, and more. During their visit to MoDOT, they met the Customer Service team, viewed the Scout system, and learned about road construction materials and engineering.

The following day KC District's Traffic Incident Manager, Chief Accountant, Civil Rights Specialist, and both a Traffic Engineer and Design Engineer devoted an afternoon on the UMKC Campus in a mock interview process doing a series of one-on-one interviews with KCSTI students that allowed them to delve into what they do day-to-day to make MoDOT run.

The group was so impressed by the visit, Tyler a KCSTI student said. "It is right up there with Ironwood", a ropes challenge course that is constantly moving its participants as a group through highly exciting experiences to complete a goal that prepares them for the next one.

This is just one of several youth programs MoDOT supports. Earlier this summer, transportation experts



In July, the Kansas City District hosted students from the University of Missouri-Kansas City's Kansas City Summer Transportation Institute (KC-STI) as they toured the district office, Scout, and met many of the transportation professionals.



provided driver's safety education as part of driver education classes to teens in local area high schools.

The KC-STI is one of approximately 50 similar university-hosted programs in the nation, and is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration Office of Civil Rights.

KCSTI students met the Customer Service team, viewed the Scout system, and learned about road construction materials and engineering.

For more info

Jennifer Benefield
Customer Relations Manager
Kansas City District
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Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

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Central District

Record Flooding Hits South Central Missouri

The southern portion of the district is experiencing record flooding, including the closure of Interstate 44 at Jerome.

In addition to I-44, at press time Route 63 was closed in two locations - south of Vienna in Maries County and at Westphalia in Osage County - further complicating detour routes.

Maintenance crews and customer service representatives throughout the state continue to work the emergency. With more rain in the forecast, it's unknown when things will return to normal.

"We don't know for certain when flooded roadways will reopen or what additional flooding might occur," said Travis Koestner, assistant district engineer. "We appreciate the support we've received throughout the department as we battle the flooding and road closures."



Floodwaters from the Gasconade River closed Interstate 44 at Jerome on Wednesday morning.

Berm Builders

The Linn maintenance crew – in conjunction with Marty Buscher Backhoe & Landscaping – recently teamed up to solve a water overflow problem and made modifications to a ditch line at Meta Hill on Highway 133 in Osage County.

"The water flow at Meta Hill was so strong during the rainy season that it jumped out of the ditch line and onto both MoDOT property and an adjacent owner's property," said Central District Maintenance Superintendent Kenneth Strube.

Once the problem was discovered, MoDOT's Linn maintenance crew and the Buscher group sprang into action and worked together to help build a berm to maintain the watershed on both properties.

"Thanks to Marty's crew and the Linn shed we got this issue fixed in a timely manner," Strube



Meta Hill Before

said. “The work is top notch. It’s really strong and we’re all really pleased with how it turned out.”



Meta Hill After

Keeping It Light



Central District Senior Supply Agent Keith Jacobsen has come up with a fun way to keep workers in the maintenance field informed of his mail delivery schedule with a fun, simple bi-weekly e-mail called “Keith’s Corner.”

Mail delivery to district maintenance sheds has a varied schedule from week to week due to a variety of factors. Without Keith’s e-mail update, most of the sheds would not know when Keith or his crew planned to deliver important mail, freight and signs. The e-mails not only inform the sheds of the supply crew’s transport schedule and the contents of the delivery, but they also allow the maintenance staff to prepare important packages for pickup and distribution to other locations within the district.

“These e-mails could have been run-of-the-mill correspondence, but Keith takes the extra time to make the information entertaining with jokes, mutual points of interest, and a fun fact,” said Central District General Services Manager Colleen Welter. The fun facts have referred to a wide range of subjects, from American history to the anatomy of a foot, and even the naming origin of former U.S. President Harry S. Truman’s middle initial.

“Every week I get to chuckle or I learn something new from Keith’s Corner,” Welter said. “I think it’s great that Keith took the time to gather comments from the field, noted their concerns and worked to find a consistent way to communicate that’s fun for all the folks who read it.”

Barrel Bob Gets a Makeover

The Central District’s General Services crew treated Barrel Bob to a manly spa day to get him ready for his 10-day appearance at the Missouri State Fair, which starts today. In addition to getting a new hat and vest, BB was treated to an overall overhaul. The sprucing up was much needed as the spring’s heavy rains and winds toppled Barrel Bob on a number of occasions as he worked to remind motorists to drive safely in work zones. Special thanks to Rodney Colbert, who took Bob on the country drive from St. James to the garage, and to Alan “Coco” Kliethermes, who gave Bob his spiffy new look!



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New Mississippi River Bridge Connected, Enters Final Construction Phase

by Andrew Gates

In a two-day operation, ironworkers placed the final steel for the new I-70 bridge across the Mississippi River between St. Louis and St. Clair County.

Early in the morning of July 25, crews placed two 10-foot long edge girders between the Missouri and the Illinois sides of the bridge. The rest of the day was spent putting in the more than 2,600 bolts needed to connect that steel.

"This was a fairly tricky operation. We had to deal with temperatures, adjusting cables and using a jack to move the bridge to make the final connections," said Randy Hitt, bridge project director.

Shortly after noon on July 26, the ironworkers positioned the 80-foot long, 30,000 pound final floor beam.



Crews swing the final floor beam into position for the new I-70 bridge across the Mississippi River Bridge in downtown St. Louis. The project team, partners and media watched the 80 foot long, 30,000 pound beam installed connecting the bridge.

"We've entered the final stretch. Now, we're building barrier wall, installing lights, painting and completing the deck overlay. We're on track to be open in early 2014," said Hitt.

Safety Team Conducts Cone Pilot Program

by Kristi Coppinger and Lisa Lamons

The St. Louis District will be conducting a Safety Cone Pilot Program scheduled to begin in late August in an effort to decrease backing and fleet vehicle incidents. Cones will be required for dump trucks, one-ton trucks, and pick-up trucks. The program involves placing safety cones in the front, back or in both areas whenever the vehicle is in a parked position, much like many other private companies. It will be reviewed after the initial six months and then again at the end of the year long program,

"We want to ensure we perfect the program and get as many of the bugs out of it as we can," said Lisa Lamons, safety and health manager. "So we will be evaluating all the feedback we get from our employees over the next year."



Three work units in the district have been conducting a mini pilot program prior the official implementing of the program. These work units not only had ZERO backing incidents, but overall they had ZERO fleet incidents. This was very impressive. Many employees in this mini pilot program said it promoted a safer atmosphere on the lots and in the field, ensured everyone was doing their Circle Checks, and these actions confirmed that MoDOT cares and we are being safe! Overall, these employees in the mini program really liked it and said it had more positive benefits over negative benefits.

St. Louis School Interns Tour MoDOT Projects and Engineer Jobs

by Linda Wilson Horn

MoDOT St. Louis District summer interns shared their summer vacation and toured various aspects of MoDOT work on one of the last days of their summer.

In total, the St. Louis District hired 26 interns this summer. They worked in Construction, Design, Materials, Planning/Local Roads and Traffic.

The August 2 intern tour visited the New Mississippi River Bridge, the I-70 Blanchette Bridge, the I-64 Daniel Boone Bridge, the St. Charles Maintenance Facility and the Transportation Management Center.

Following the tour, each intern gave a five minute briefing on how they spent their summer and what they learned to take back to school with them. The intent of the day was to show the interns the various engineering facets and career options at MoDOT.



Motorist Assist Shift Supervisor Nate Bowen educates summer interns on the importance of moving traffic out of the driving lanes.



Project Director Randy Hitt gave MoDOT summer interns a briefing on the new Mississippi River Bridge from a vantage point along the river. Students spent one of the last days of their summer work at MoDOT touring projects in the St. Louis District and learning about the variety of engineering jobs at MoDOT. With the success of this year's intern tour, the St. Louis District plans on continuing to educate future interns on the variety of jobs at MoDOT.

For more info

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Southwest District

SW District at Work



BRIDGE WORK: Members of the Regional Bridge Crew repairing a joint on an I-49 bridge north of Jasper are, from left, Intermediate Maintenance Worker Scott Oliver, Intermediate Maintenance Worker Adam Hawkins, Senior Maintenance Worker Daniel Meyers and Senior Maintenance Worker Chad Barger. (Photo by Jamie Sartin)



PATCHING: Laying asphalt patches on Benton County Route A east of Cole Camp is a combined crew from Cole Camp and Warsaw, including Warsaw Senior Maintenance Worker Kurt Bagley in the grader and Cole Camp Senior Maintenance Worker Kris Eckhoff on the roller. Click on the photo to view video of the operation. (Photo by Bob Edwards)

I-44 Truck Parking Facilities Near Halltown Opening Soon

by David Mitchell

Work to convert the I-44 Halltown rest area to truck parking is nearly complete, and the facility could be open to traffic as early as the week of Aug. 12.

Deadline for the opening is Labor Day weekend.

Work began on May 30 when the former rest area was closed to traffic for building demolition and removal of salvageable material.

The truck parking area will feature 22 spaces on the eastbound side and 20 spaces on the westbound side at Mile Marker 52 of I-44. Each side will have two vault toilets with no plumbing similar to those used in state parks.

Truck parking areas are important because federal trucking safety rules require commercial truck drivers to rest periodically. Missouri has 19 truck parking facilities, including the two opening at Halltown.

“Truck drivers have got to get off the road before their drive time is up,” MoDOT Assistant Director of Motor Carrier Services Scott Marion said. “Drivers like Missouri because, compared to other states, we’ve got a reliable supply of safe, relatively quiet parking spaces.”

In recent years, MoDOT upgraded the rest areas at Conway and Joplin to welcome centers, spending \$10.8 million rebuilding the Conway facility and \$4.9 million on the Joplin facility. These centers feature modern restrooms, vending machines, staffed visitors centers and picnic areas.

At Halltown, several million dollars would have been needed to upgrade the waste water system and replace rest area

buildings along with other improvements, Southwest District Assistant to the District Engineer Scott Bachman said. But with finances much tighter now, MoDOT could not justify that kind of non-roadway spending.

“We need to put as much of our limited money as we can into maintaining the highway system,” he said.

Halltown’s conversion to truck parking cost about \$307,000.

Another factor in the decision to convert Halltown to truck parking only is that highway travel today is more reliable and more comfortable than when construction of the interstate highway system began in the mid-1950s.

“Instead of a rest stop every hour, we can spread these out every two hours,” Bachman said. “And more convenience stores and restaurants offer travelers more choices for places to stop.”

The distance between the Joplin and Conway welcome centers, for example, is about 110 miles – nearly a two-hour drive.

MoDOT maintains modern restrooms and other amenities at 23 rest areas and welcome centers where travelers can refresh themselves, grab a snack and pick up a newspaper.

Take a Child to Work Day



Land Surveyor Larry Nanneman helps son Brayden check out the cab of a dump truck. (Photo by Bob Edwards)



Viewing Springfield traffic cameras and Google Earth on computers set up in Financial Services are Joplin Senior Highway Designer Craig Switzer and daughter Linda, left, and Monett Senior Maintenance Worker Justin Presson and daughter Jaylyn. (Photo by David Mitchell)



Joplin Senior Survey Technician Randy McDaniel, right, helps Emily Thompson and Senior Design Technician David Backus use a transit. (Photo by Bob Edwards)



Springfield Construction Intern Angela Hunt, left, shows finely ground glass beads used in pavement striping to District Construction Engineer Steve Campbell, center, and sons Tyler and Alex and Branson Resident Engineer Johnny Teegardin and children Katelyn and Ty. (Photo by Bob Edwards)

Seeing What Dad and Mom Do at MoDOT

by Angela Eden

Children, grandchildren and friends of Southwest District employees who toured the Southwest District office complex for Take a Child to Work Day got to experience the wide variety of duties MoDOT performs every day.

The July 25 event in Springfield drew 115 employees and youngsters.

Springfield Maintenance parked a dump truck, striper and bucket truck for children to sit in and learn about, and Incident Response set up one of its vehicles.

Project Development staffers explained how asphalt is manufactured and let youngsters simulate the process by making a

chocolate oatmeal cookie.

Other activities were provided by Right-of-Way, Financial Services, Information Systems, Construction and Materials, Risk Management, Traffic, the Southwest Chapter of the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety and the Regional Counsel's office.

A pizza lunch was provided by The Southwest Chapter of the Transportation Employees of Missouri.

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SE District Upgrades Area Sidewalks

This week, SE District highway designers, including a member of the ADA Interdisciplinary Team, are hitting the streets to rate area sidewalks and prioritize future projects. The group will visit cities and towns in each county of the 25-county region.

The efforts are part of MoDOT's goal to upgrade all facilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by 2027.

MoDOT respects the rights of all those who use state transportation facilities and accepts the responsibility of providing equal access to all users. With this in mind, it is the goal of the Department to upgrade MoDOT-owned facilities.

To date, 90 towns in the Southeast District have MoDOT-owned sidewalks.

Contracts for sidewalk projects were recently awarded for the following locations:

- June-A \$115,214 contract was awarded to Fronabarger Concreters, Inc., for sidewalk improvements on Route E and Route D in Oak Ridge. In addition, a \$580,000 contract was awarded to R. L. Persons Construction, Inc., for sidewalk improvements in the towns of Malden, Gideon and Bernie.
- July-A \$234,953 contract was awarded to Jokerst Paving & Contracting, Inc., for sidewalk improvements on Route 32 in Bismarck in St. Francois County.



MoDOT respects the rights of all those who use state transportation facilities and accepts the responsibility of providing equal access to all users.

Route M Overpass Construction Underway



Work is underway to complete the Route M overpass project in Scott County by Aug. 31, weather permitting.

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission awarded a contract for an emergency bridge replacement on Route M in Scott County in early July. The bridge collapsed following a train collision of Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroads on May 25.

The \$2,319,363 contract was awarded to Goodwin Brothers Construction Company.

MoDOT's contractor has been diligently working to complete the project and open the bridge to traffic by Aug. 31.

This week, the contractor plans to place all of the beams and precast deck panels, weather permitting. Next week, work will be underway to form the bridge deck and place reinforcing steel in preparation for the deck pour in mid-August, weather permitting.

For more information, please contact Resident Engineer Brian Holt at 573-344-2320 or MoDOT's Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-888-ASK-MODOT (1-888-275-6636).

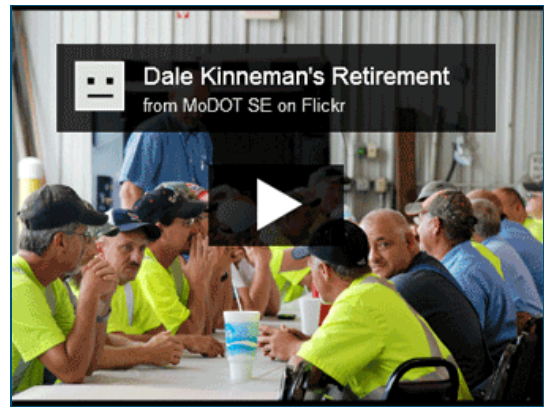
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AE Dale Kinneman Retires

On July 30, many MoDOT employees and retirees gathered at the Park Hills Maintenance Shed to say goodbye to Dale Kinneman. Kinneman worked for the department for 29 years and was the North Area – Area Engineer at the time of his retirement. We wish Dale the best during his retirement years!



To view photos from Dale Kinneman's retirement, please click the link above or visit www.flickr.com/photos/modot_se.

SE District Kudos

The following comments were received from Southeast Missouri residents:

Douglas County-Ms. Kathrine Wagstaff:

I live off JJ highway, and the grass alongside was recently cut. This was the best job that I have seen in 13 years, and having to drive late at night from work, I appreciate the extra safety afforded by the mowing. Thanks and please pass it on.

New Madrid County-Mr. Don Adams:

Mr. Don Adams called to let the area maintenance crew know that he appreciated how quickly they finished mowing Route HH. He said he called one day, and the next day the crew mowed and took care of the sight distance issues.

Howell County-David Yielding:

David Yielding called, and said he was very impressed with how quickly the maintenance crew fixed the potholes Route 160 and County Road 7140. He sent an e-mail, and the maintenance crews had it fixed the next day. He said thank you very much.

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